

**MINUTES OF THE
ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND COVERAGE TASK FORCE**
Tuesday, May 21, 2002 – 9:00 a.m. – Room 223 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. Peter Knudson, Co-Chair
Rep. Rebecca Lockhart, Co-Chair
Sen. D. Chris Buttars
Rep. Trisha Beck
Rep. Jim Ferrin
Rep. David Litvack
Rep. J. Morgan Philpot
Mr. Rod L. Betit
Mr. Merwin U. Stewart

Members Absent:

Sen. Paula Julander

Staff Present:

Ms. Jami Momberger, Research Analyst
Ms. Catherine Dupont, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Jennifer Markham, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials can be found at <http://www.image.le.state.ut.us/imaging/history.asp> or by contacting the Task Force secretary, Jennifer Markham, at 538-1032..

1. Call to Order

Chair Knudson called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. Sen. Julander was excused from the meeting.

MOTION: Rep. Litvack moved to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2001 meeting. The motion passed unanimously, with Rep. Ferrin and Rep. Philpot absent for the vote.

The Task Force members and staff introduced themselves.

2. Utah Oral Health Improvement Initiative

Sen. Knudson explained that the oral health initiative was added to the Access to Health Care and Coverage Task Force during the 2002 General Session.

Dr. Steven Steed, State Dental Director, Department of Health, introduced Dr. Cottam.

Dr. Wayne Cottam, Dental Director, Community Health Centers, Inc. and Chair, Oral Health Access Committee for the Utah Dental Association, discussed access to oral health services and distributed a copy of his presentation. He also distributed "Oral Health and Learning," "Oral Disease: A Crisis Among Children of Poverty," "Promoting Awareness, Preventing Pain: Facts on Early Childhood Caries (ECC)," "Why Should CHIP Dental Benefits Include Restorations (fillings)?" "Children's Oral Health," "Links Between Oral and General Health," and "What Disease Affects More Children Than Any Other?"

Ms. Karie Minaga-Miya, Primary Children's Medical Center, discussed her participation as a nurse trainee in the Utah Leadership and Education for Children with Special Health Care Needs. She summarized her research on fluoride varnish and children with special health care needs and provided the cost benefits of different interventions to increase access to dental care. She provided a copy of her presentation for the meeting's history.

Task Force discussion followed.

Ms. Cathy Dupont discussed the State of Washington's Administrative Rule and Statute that created a screening and education program provided by the schools and Department of Health, and a continuing educational program at the medical schools and medical societies. She distributed "Washington Administrative Code" and "The State of Washington Bill Text."

Chair Knudson turned the meeting over to Rep. Lockhart.

3. HRSA Grant Update

Mr. Chad Westover, Project Director, Covering the Uninsured 2002, provided an update on the HRSA grant and distributed a copy of "Utah Interim Report Utah State Planning Grant" and "2001 Utah Health Status Survey Health Insurance Coverage: Preview Report."

4. H.B. 248 "Classification of State Employees for Insurance Purposes"

Rep. Jack Seitz provided an overview of H.B. 248 and addressed the reasons for the Governor's veto. Rep. Seitz stated that the projected savings for 2002-2003 for agencies participating in the UBN program (Utah Behavioral Health) would be approximately \$287,000. He said the savings could be more or less depending on who joins the program.

Mr. Jack Tanner, Executive Director, Utah Behavioral Health Care Network, emphasized that the state made the decision to provide health insurance to employees of local mental health, substance abuse, aging and adult services, and local health departments through contracts administered by the state Public Employees Health Plan. He stated the counties can provide the health insurance or contract with other insurance agencies. He estimated that Legislature provides 70% of the funding. He stated that a modified version of H.B. 248 is a way to save administrative costs and lower administrative expenses.

Ms. Kathy Froerer, Executive Director, Utah Association of Local Health Departments, stated the local health departments have experienced a diminished capacity to meet the growing demands of public employee's health insurance costs. She indicated the local health departments are in favor of a modified version of H.B. 248.

Mr. Linn Baker, Director, PEHP (Public Employees Health Program), provided information relevant to the Task Force's previous discussion on oral health care. He stated that PEHP's experience with the dental plan for state employees, had twice the expected costs when it began but tapered off to normal after couple of years. He indicated they saw the same pattern with CHIP's dental coverage. He stated that with the federal match for dental service he felt it could be budget neutral. Mr. Baker then addressed H.B. 248. He stated that only state employees are required to be members of PEHP. He stated that PEHP provides an Intermountain Health Care program, Exclusive Care; an Altius program, which is a non-IHC network; and Preferred Care. He explained the value of risk pools. He stated one of his concerns with H.B. 248 is the ability to freely move in and out of the risk pool. He stated that the UBN risk pool is managed successfully and this bill would require the elimination of this risk pool. He expressed

concern that the addition of some of the larger groups into the state risk pool required by H.B. 248 could increase the costs for the state risk pool. Mr. Baker said state employees would fund the increased cost.

Ms. Candace Daly, Utah Association of Health Underwriters, expressed concern that more of the private market pool will want to join the state risk pool increasing the costs to the small private market group.

Mr. Charles Cowley, Legislative Committee, Utah Association of Health Underwriters, indicated that moving to different pools only shifts the burden from one budget to another with no savings gained. He expressed opposition to the redraft of the bill because it doesn't specify who can come into the program.

5. Review of Potential Study Plan for the 2002 Interim Period

The Task Force members cancelled the meeting on July 26 due to conflicts with the National Conference of State Legislatures and approved the other dates on the proposed 2002 schedule.

Sen. Butters proposed a review of the methods for contract bidding and administration of Medicare and Medicaid for mental health services.

Rep. Ferrin expressed concern about the relationship between usual and customary charges and reimbursement rates by insurance companies. The Chair requested staff research this disparity.

Mr. Betit indicated the recommendations from last year were to renew the Task Force for another year, follow the waiver to see where it is going, and participate in recommendation of the HRSA grant.

Rep. Beck expressed concerned about the nursing and doctor shortage.

Rep. Litvak expressed interest in the reviewing the 1931 medicare expansion again and take another look at other states' proposals.

Chair Lockhart suggested reviewing the HIP program and premium rates. She also suggested reviewing the effects of funding reductions on Medicaid.

Ms. Judi Hilman, Health Policy Analyst, Utah Issues, distributed "Suggested Topics for 2002." She invited the Task Force members to join the Drug Policy Advisory Committee being formed by the Department of Health and Utah Issues.

6. Primary Care 1115 Waiver Update

Mr. Rod Betit, Executive Director, Department of Health, provided an update on the implementation of Primary Care 1115 Waiver and distributed a copy of his presentation, "Covering the Uninsured 2002."

Ms. Daly stated the goal is a richer employer plan and insurance companies are willing to cooperate with Department of Health for a matching employer portion.

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7. Other Items/Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Litvak moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously, with Sen. Knudson and Rep. Ferrin absent for the vote.